



Representative Steve Kirby

29th District

December 2003

Greetings from Olympia. Well, that's not exactly accurate... How about, "greetings from the office in my basement in the south end of Tacoma!" Just a quick note to give you a little advance information regarding the upcoming legislative session.

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I believe the most-talked-about issue of the regular session in January will be a new state primary election system. As you may know, the Federal Courts have thrown out our Blanket Primary...the one that allows us to vote in the primary for the person we think will do the best job regardless of political party affiliation. Replacing it could mean forcing voters to choose a party, as it's done in most other states. Just what I need...another federal court mandate to do something the citizens hate!!

It's abundantly clear to me that the voters love and cherish their blanket primary...and many are either unaware or don't believe that we are being forced to change it.

And it doesn't help that the issue is being portrayed in the media as a means by which the political party hacks can have access to what has always been private information about citizens in Washington State – their political party affiliation. This in the days when millions of Americans have enthusiastically signed up for the do-not-call list.

These are the alternatives currently under consideration:

- Closed primary - Voters register by party and receive ballots for the party in which they are registered; the public and political parties have access to the list.
- Open primary/public choice - Voters select a party ballot; the public and political parties have access to that list.
- Open primary/private choice - Voters select a party ballot in private; no public record is kept of the voter's ballot choice.
- "Cajun" primary - The top two vote getters in the primary go on to the general election without regard to party; there are no lists.

One very likely scenario not listed above is that there will not be support in either house for any of the alternatives. Chaos anyone? I'm not sure what will happen in that case. Stay tuned.

Call the hotline and tell me what you think.

"Just what I need...another federal court mandate to do something the citizens hate!!"



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